

Name Helen Fiebig Bennett Graduation year 1937

Today's date: Dec 2 / 1991 1991

I. Why did you choose to study at MES?

Because I love sports, & still do

II. What alternatives did you consider?

Turning

III. What are some of your fondest memories of being a student at MES?

The education I received, the teachers
& the people I met

IV. What are some of your worst memories of being a student at MES?

None

V. With respect to your course work what are some of your fondest memories?

I liked all of it.

VI. With respect to your course work what are some of your worst memories?

Teaching at the Community center, they expected too much.

VII. What do you remember about the school's principal and board?

I liked all the teachers, Miss Jackson, Miss Hardless, Miss Lomax, and Miss Lane & Baker.

VIII. How do you think most student's paid for their education at MES [summer jobs, parents paid....]?

Don't know.

IX. In what ways have you kept in touch with alumnae of MES?

None, I moved so many times I lost track.

X. What kind of work/volunteer activities did you do as a result of your education at MES?

None

XI. Did you pursue further education following MES? Where? Why?

No

XII. PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

- A. Your year of birth: 19____
B. Your country of birth: Canada
C. Country of mother's birth: Canada
D. Country of father's birth: Canada
E. When you entered MES what occupations did your parents have?

Mother's occupation: None

Father's occupation: His own business

- F. Where were you living before coming to MES?

City: Stratford, Ont.

Province: Ontario Country: Canada

- G. Which school did you attend prior to entering MES?

High School in Stratford

What grade (level) did you complete at this school? 8 349?

Was this a private or public school? public school

- H. If you married, which year did you first do so: 1939

Married to: (name) Mrs Donald Bennett

Occupation of husband when married: Banker

XIII. Would you be interested in receiving a copy of my abstract when I complete my study? yes

Could you list other addresses than from the class of 39, and 41, or do you know of MES students who have passed on? Since you are my only 1937 graduate I am especially interested if you have addresses or know those who are deceased from that year.

- 1 - Mrs Margaret Mason, 1020 Mathers St.
N. Vancouver, B.C. V7T-2 E2 1937
- 2 - Also Mary knows of a Muriel Sinclair in Vancouver
I don't know her married name. 1937

Interview with Eleanor Keyes Kay
November 19, 1991
By John Byl

Netta Morrison was our Gold Medallists.... This was our graduation picture. I think it was taken in the Dance studio in the MES building, or otherwise in the theatre around the corner where the graduation was. No, I'm sure it was in the dance studio. There were very high ceilings in that building. Excitement! Excitement! We graduated in 1936 with 19 I think.... Mary Edumunds, this second girl, was pulled out. Her father did not want her to go to MES, but wanted her to be a nurse. She did not want to be a nurse and wanted to go to MES. So she went to MES for one year and then went to nursing and hated it all her live. Which was too bad. [I have her here as a graduate in 1937]. I think the picture was taken in the park just above St. Clair where we used to play soccer, field hockey and lacrosse, Ramsden Park. I think that is where it was taken.

That was the reunion [1975]. Bessie was not so well the last time I saw her.... Bessie Pitt was instrumental in organizing that reunion....

When I went to MES, I had not gone to senior Matric. It was only on good behaviour and so on that I got in. So this was my letter to say that I got in. I chose MES because I was always interested in Phys. Ed., and a lot of people I knew had gone through MES. At that time it was all I wanted to do was to go into Phys. Ed. and I was not university material at that time. This was my alternative. I had not been a good student up to that time at all. But the minute I got to MES it was just wonderful. I was doing what I wanted to do.

This was the brochure.... Modern dance was the kind of thing I hated. I had no imagination. To go up and act like a pig was unusual for me. I did not have any luck with that at all. But you know when I started to teach that was the first class I had to teach. So I had to like it....

The first year we went to Tanamakoon and the second year we went to Cochiching.... You are welcome to take this whole thing along. It is musty but you are welcome to take it. [are you sure?] Yes....

I met my senior, Mary Leask, a little while ago. I had lunch with her for the first time in 56 years. She was my senior. She came from Edmonton or Saskatchewan. She is still alive. I could get her address for you. She did a lot of Y work out west when she graduated.

When I graduated the first interview I had was with the WCTU. They had a building just around the corner on Elm street, near MES. I went there hoping to get a job as a Phys. Ed. teacher in the club they had there. I will never forget my interview. It

was as clear as the day I went. It was a group of 10 ladies with their hats, and gloves, and very very proper, and I had to sit and be questioned. Finally when I was just about finished, one of them looked at me said: "Miss Keyes do you smoke?" I thought it was really none of her business, and at that time I didn't, and so I said no I don't. She responded: "I was thinking, you wear lipstick, and any girl who wears lip stick must be a smoker." I'll never forget it. I only lasted six months because the gym classes consisted of mostly of dance, and the dance teacher opened up a new studio and took all her dance students with her. So I was left with six or eight girls to give badminton and lessons to, so there was no point in that. Then I had the opportunity to go to Eaton's in their recreation department. And that time Eaton's had a very large recreation department and they had a camp opening on the 24th of May, Shadow Lake. You went up there, but mattress covers on, and did all the maintenance and things like that, and then spent the Summer there. It was all strictly business girls, and eight staff at the most. Bessie Pitt was the director. When she went overseas during the war I took over for her. She retired several times.... Latter on she became chaperon to Lady Eaton and travelled all over the world as her companion.... Most people did not do much travelling in those days.

I was a city girl. Almost an outcast if you did not live in the residence, which was disappointed, but my family could not afford for me to live in residence, and besides there was no reason since I lived in Toronto.... You missed out.... I got along well with the faculty and loved everything about the school....

[Sunday it was expected that students would attend church, was that emphasised during the week as well?] No not really....

Medical certificates, we had to have them. That is the invitation to the graduation exercises....

[The school was right on the corner of Yonge and McGill?] No, the MES building was 415 Yonge St. Right on the corner on the southeast corner of Yonge and McGill. Then around the corner, the next building to it was the YWCA. They had one of the first swimming pools in it. The ceiling was not any higher than this one [her living room]. We had fun. We'd go for diving lessons and many a person hit their head on the ceiling. When I went to Eaton's finally, I had taught swimming there. But I would have to take the girls to the Y from diving because we could not do that in our little pool. It was very small.

George Pidgeon was well know from Bloor St. United. My mother and dad both sang in the choir there. This was before they were married. We lived out here and attended Runnymede....

The difference between diplomas and certificates is that the diploma people had their senior matriculation, and the others did not. They took exactly the same course but it was your

background. This was the requirement really and it was by special consideration, and then you went in with two months probation to make sure you could stay....

Helen Fiebig, I am not sure if she ever graduated. She was very tiny.... She is in London....

I had fun. My mother had bought me a dress at Eaton's. It was a dress with Jacket. It was supposed to be altered and I was supposed to pick it up the night before graduation. We went to pick it up and the jacket was there but the dress was gone. Needless to say, panic! But Eaton's got a seamstress and the same material and had the dress made for Saturday afternoon. I did not have it for the dress rehearsal....

I went back and taught figure skating. I never did any figure skating till I was at MES. We went down once a week and took lessons from Mrs. Kaulbach. She taught first half hour figure skating, the other half hockey. I just loved the figure skating, and just could not get enough of it. So I decided to get some proper lessons and joined the Granite Club, and for \$35.00 for the year I joined and I could skate every day of the year. I would go up before classes in the morning, about 8 o'clock, and take my lessons and then once I started to teach I would go and take the lesson and then run down to the University and teach it. I am still involved in skating. I am coordinator for all the skating programs in Etobicoke. We have about 110 classes a week and I hire and train the staff, supervise them. I am still doing that.... Murial Nelles taught for me. They saw me teach at Varsity and Ross Workman, he was manager there, asked if I would be interested in teaching children on Saturday afternoons. I said I would love it. He said I will give you 25 cents for each child. So I started and maybe had six or seven the first lessons. About three years had passed and I had hired seven teachers, and we had a couple of hundred children. This was all at an outdoor skating club. It was strictly a hobby for me, I would do it after hours.

Helen Fiebig graduated in 37....

I gave one of the Holiday courses. I think in dancing. We were very close-knit. The residence students would leave and the alumnae would come together....

Gunnel bobbing was fun. You just had to get the rhythm. You had to be good at everything you did. [Dorothy Jackson] She was one of the teachers. Very demanding and expected you to have as much energy as she did....

I left Eatons in 48 to be married and was out of the working field for 15 years till my husband passed away and then I decided to try and get back into it again. So I went to the Y and directed their Camp Tapiwingo. I was with them for 12 years, and after that I changed went to the Easter Seal Society, which was

the Ontario Society for Crippled Children. That was exciting. Because you were director of five different camps throughout Ontario. And hired 250 staff at that point. I knew nothing about crippled children. Camping I knew backwards. So I had to learn very fast. It was the happiest time I could think of. It was a wonderful experience. My husband died 28 years ago. My girls were eight and eleven and that point. Thank heavens for them. I do not know how I would have managed without them. My husband was with Standard Chemical, a sales manager for Ontario....

This was a feature. Students came from all over Canada. Fencing was Bess Pitt's forte. She just loved fencing....

Many people came to the demonstrations....

This is 39, a bigger class....

She [Jackson] was a little masculine. Not mannish. With her short bopped hair and very slender. Not an ounce of fat on her anywhere. A heart of gold. She lived in the residences....

I do not remember very much about Emma Scott Raff, she started the school and was an older person....

The girls would take some of their boyfriend to the dances....

Some of my friends, like June Labbett were in my class when I taught figure skating....

Elizabeth Raymer and I became very good friends. We both started to curl at the same time and took lessons together at the Granite Club. Then when we had the 50th anniversary in 75 we roomed together....

We had a lot of fun at Tanamakoon. We had to swim first thing each morning, no matter what the temperature....

Social events were a big part of the private schooling....

I think I must have been responsible for some of the alumnae parties. I was quite active in a lot of social events they had....

Have you seen Kirk Whipper. He was head of Phys. Ed. following Harry Ebbs, and he was somehow trying to get a book together on MES....

I will say that Bessie Pitt taught me all I know about camp....

The uniforms had to be just right. You had to stand on your head to make sure that the stockings and bloomers and everything met and there were no gaps or anything like that....

One of my favourite stories was my arrival at MES. We went in September to Camp and I had never been away from home before and my mother did not know too much about physical ed but we were to go to camp. They put me on the train to go to Algonquin station and I was dressed in a navy and polka dot dress with a little jacket and a hat with a brim on it and a ribbon tied down the back. We arrived in Algonquin park station and it is pouring rain. The girls from Tanamakoon in their Bermuda shorts and knee highs and what nots were there to meet us. We as juniors sat in the bottom of the canoe and paddled from Algonquin Park station to Tanamakoon. By the time I had got there the dress had shrunk, the hat was no longer turned up. It must have been quite a sight. I do not think I ever forgave my mother for that. Instead of being in a smart uniform like everybody else, I was all dressed up to go to a tea-party....

My dad was with Sherman Williams paints as a salesperson, he travelled and was away from Monday to Friday. My mother looked after the family at home. She would have his evening clothes ready for when he got home. Having driven from Ottawa or somewhere, she would have all his clothes laid out to go to a dance or something. Just imagine how much he wanted to go to a dance at that time....

I did not have any worse memories. The only thing that scared me was that Mary Hamilton was a member of the Oxford group. And she was very anxious, and being very young I did not have any idea. She was the principal and I was the student. Somebody put me wise that you did not get involved in that sort of thing. That was the only scary thing. Often in the mornings they had prayer by themselves for awhile. I had been brought up going to Sunday School and taught and things like that. This was different, almost like brainwashing. There were several of the girls who went along with her. There was a certain amount of pressure to join and get other people involved. It was deeper than prayer. It was a lot of do it our way. I heard that several girls had gotten quite involved and had gone through an experience. Here was a principal getting all these young girls involved in all this and they would not say no because she was the principal. I didn't want to get involved. It was secretive. You always were called into her office by yourself. A bit of manipulator as far as the young girls were concerned. I was not to sure what was going on....

The first time I saw Florence Somers she had just broken her ankle or something and when we arrived at the dock from the canoes, she had her leg in a cast and hobbling about with a cane. Dorothy Jackson started then. Raymer's bought Tanamakoon.... Patty Thomas is one of the owners, and the Smiths.... I think Labbett's Camp Oconto is another leading girls camp....

I was born in 1915, in Toronto. I was a career girl. I was not interested in marriage. I was enjoying my work too much. I met my husband in a blind date playing badminton at the Granite Club.

I had a friend who said she had a friend that has just come back from overseas and he is going to come with my friend. Talk about love at first sight. It was really quite fun. We were married a year latter. I was 33 when we got married....

I went to Runnymede public school, and then to Humberside. At Humberside is where I got interested in PE....

I still work seven days a week arranging skating classes for 12,000 people. It is fun and I have done it for so long....

Name Barb McArel Graduation year 1936

Today's date: Aug 27 1991

I. Why did you choose to study at MES?

I wanted to teach Physical Education

II. What alternatives did you consider?

B.A. at Dalhousie Tampa N.S.

III. What are some of your fondest memories of being a student at MES?

IV. What are some of your worst memories of being a student at MES?

V. With respect to your course work what are some of your fondest memories?

VI. With respect to your course work what are some of your worst memories?

VII. What do you remember about the school's principal and board?

Everyone was very good. The school having a small registration there was personal attention

VIII. How do you think most student's paid for their education at MES [summer jobs, parents paid....]?

Parents paid

IX. In what ways have you kept in touch with alumnae of MES?

Have only had continual contact with one - Dorothy Lowman Hamilton '36 She passed away last year. See Carol Iderry Duffus occasionally in Hfx.

X. What kind of work/volunteer activities did you do as a result of your education at MES?

Mostly through the Junior League of Halifax volunteer work

Taught	36 - 38	Del. Jay Radis College
"	38 - 40	Crofton House School Vancouver
"	40 - 42	Jr. School Haverhill College Toronto

XI. Did you pursue further education following MES? Where? Why?

No

Still very active
play golf - ride a bike - swim etc

XII. PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

- A. Your year of birth: 19 16
- B. Your country of birth: Canada
- C. Country of mother's birth: Canada
- D. Country of father's birth: Canada
- E. When you entered MES what occupations did your parents have?
- Mother's occupation: homemaker
- Father's occupation: deceased 32 - loaned fine insurance until death.
- F. Where were you living before coming to MES?
- City: Sydney
- Province: Nova Scotia Country: Canada
- G. Which school did you attend prior to entering MES?
- Sydney Academy (jr. Matric)
- What grade (level) did you complete at this school? 1
- Was this a private or public school? public
- H. If you married, which year did you first do so: 19 42
- Married to: (name) Dr. Henry Reardon (deceased 1986)
- Occupation of husband when married: family doctor
Lieut in Canadian Army & later

- XIII. Would you be interested in receiving a copy of my abstract when I complete my study? Yes

Could you list other addresses than from the class of 39, and 41?

She is a long time — Phyllis Jean Knight '38
friend from Sydney N.S.
198 Royal View Ave
Victoria
British Columbia V9B1A7



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